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# Inside Information

WITHDRAWN

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of Agriculture

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## COMMUNICATORS SHOULD BE ALERT TO HIDDEN, UNINTENTIONAL MESSAGES IN PICTURES

"What is said is often not as important as what isn't," said Russell Forte of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Information. He was speaking of hidden messages in photographs. "The picture you've selected for a publication or poster may tell your audience something other than what you want to tell them, without your being aware of it. It could even harm your effort."

To illustrate, Forte showed a slide of a subway poster designed to tell people to be careful boarding subway cars so they don't trip. Two additional messages the subway system probably didn't want to give -- but did -- through the poster's photograph were (1) there's standing room only on the subway, and (2) people bunch up around the doors and make it hard to get on and off.

Forte spoke Nov. 26 at one of a series of monthly workshops presented by Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) at USDA in Washington. Tom Tate of USDA's Extension Service chaired the workshop, offered by teleconference to suburban USDA information offices by ACE's D.C. Region President Betty Fleming.

"We're all being manipulated subconsciously," Forte said. "We're said to all have photographic memories, allowing us to take information in subliminally -- subconsciously -- and file it away until later. Your mind is quicker than your eye."

Forte used slides showing news pictures published in this country and in Russia and posters and advertisements that have appeared nationally. Forte also showed examples of pictures that couldn't be published in Russia, brought out of Russia by immigrants. These had messages Russian leaders don't want Russians to see, such as men crying and disasters.

The outcry from some newspictures published in this country almost led to libel suits, he said, because of unintended messages. Learning to read the hidden messages can make the news more meaningful to you, Forte said.

He said we can all read many of these hidden messages by learning more about body language, childhood programming of our minds, being aware of sexism and racism and especially "reading between the lines," meaning the white space between the lines of type may be what you should decipher, rather than the type itself. "The central figures in a photograph may be only decoys," Forte said.

(12/1)

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## GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY TO HOLD PUBLICATION SPECIALIST CAREER NIGHT

You want to meet other publishing professionals? Learn about careers in publishing? Discover how to develop your skills in editing, writing, design and production, management, and marketing? Or ask questions about publishing careers?

Answers to those questions will be provided at a publication specialist program career night, Thursday, Jan. 15, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in the Center for Continuing Education at George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Anyone interested should mail a reservation to: Publication Specialist Program, CCEW/Division of Continuing Education, George Washington University, 801 22nd Street, N.W., Suite T-409, Washington, DC 20052.

For additional information, call (202) 994-7273. Ask for Dee Buchanan, Mary Herman or Sydney Furash.

(12/4)

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# CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY OFFERS SEMINAR ON UNDERSTANDING WASHINGTON NEWS MEDIA

Those who want to understand public relations and the Washington, D.C., news media may be interested in a one-day seminar offered by the CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY, on Thursday, Jan. 22.

The program will be divided into four segments: Understanding the Washington news media from a public relations perspective, understanding public relations from a journalist's perspective, Congress and press relations, and electronic (video) press releases. In addition, a Washington columnist will give a luncheon talk.

A CQ flier on the seminar says benefits of attendance range from helping one pinpoint what makes information newsworthy and how to target it to zeroing in on the uniqueness of public relations in the Washington market.

Fee for the 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. seminar, including lunch, is \$295.

To register or obtain speaker information, call the CQ Registrar at (202) 887-8620.

(12/4)

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## FORMER MOSCOW BUREAU CHIEF, DUSKO DODER, SPEAKS AT COMMUNICATORS' LUNCHEON

"Russians will deal with you best if you tell them exactly what you want to know," said Dusko Doder, Moscow bureau chief of the WASHINGTON POST from 1981 to 1985. "You still may not get the information you want but then again you may and they'll respect you more for being honest. In other words," Doder said, "don't go to them and ask about 'X' when you really are trying to learn about 'Y.'"

Doder made his remarks Dec. 2 at one of a series of "celebrity lunches" sponsored by Washington, D.C., Region of Agricultural Communicators in Education. ACE held the luncheon at USDA dining room (next to the Secretary's dining room).

Doder spent seven years reporting on Russia from Moscow and East European capitals for the POST and United Press International. He speaks the language as a Russian would, a skill he feels helped Russians open up to him more. Doder said lack of fluency in Russian works against our diplomats there. "I think right now," he said, "there are only two people in the U.S. embassy in Moscow who could act as a translator."

His fluency in Russian helped Doder scoop the world on the death of Russian leader Yuri Andropov, a story no one believed and which therefore was relegated to page 28 of the WASHINGTON POST. How he made his scoop is detailed in chapter one of his book, "Shadows and Whispers: Power Politics Inside the Kremlin from Brezhnev to Gorbachev," now at book stores.

Some other points Doder made:

- the U.S. grain embargo against Russia because of its invasion of Afghanistan was a mistake because it drove Russia to Argentina for grain.

- Russians are more open under their new leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. One out of two will talk to you now, compared to one of ten before. Gorbachev studied agriculture in college (he later became the Minister of Agriculture for the Politburo), and his wife, Raisa, wrote her graduate thesis on world sociology.

(more)

## FORMER MOSCOW BUREAU CHIEF (continued)

-- Russians don't know how to act while waiting for the Communism of Marx and Engles to come. They won't take the risks Gorbachev asks of them, although they may earn far more income, because they are afraid to risk the security of their present low incomes.

-- Andropov and Gorbachev are the first two "intelligent" leaders the Russians have had under communism.

-- Russians who come to the U.S. to work for their government have trouble coping mentally with the avalanche of information available compared to that available to them in Russia.

-- a reporter sent abroad should know the language. How would you treat a foreign reporter here if he didn't know your language?

-- Americans don't seem to care about things outside the U.S. or they would learn more languages and show more interest. (12/5)

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## ON-LINE DATABASES ARE VIEWED AS COSTLY BY USERS, ACCORDING TO PRIVATE STUDY

Many users of on-line databases perceive them as costly and therefore demand more from them than from other, more traditional information sources, according to a study published by International Resource Development, Inc.

Although corporate users have the perception that they're being over-charged, the firms are willing to pay for the information.

The report, "Electronic Publishing: Paperless Information Vending," projects that the on-line database services market will have revenues of \$1.9 billion for 1986, and will more than double over the next five years.

But due to the cost, the IRDI report says users are more demanding of the services, requiring features such as frequent updating, new information, variety and detail, and accuracy.

Some on-line database vendors are reluctant to enter the market. Several vendors entered the market in the last few years, but then turned around and left it. (12/5)

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## MORE INFORMATION MULTIPLIERS SIGNED UP FOR USDA'S ELECTRONIC INFO SERVICES

USDA's primary service for electronic dissemination of information (EDI) continues to gain users who are information "retailers."

Nihon Keizai Shinbun, Inc., of Tokyo, Japan, is one of the latest to sign up for the EDI service. This large media firm publishes the JAPAN ECONOMIC JOURNAL with an international circulation of about 3 million, one of the largest daily newspapers in Japan and other publications, operates some radio and television stations, and now offers a couple of computerized information services. They access EDI information via satellite from Tokyo.

The Japanese media firm joins eight other information disseminators who access USDA information via EDI: AgNet, AgriData Network, Bonneville Telecommunications, Data Resources Inc., Dialcom Inc., Knight-Ridder Financial News, Oster (PRO FARMER) Communications, and Agribusiness USA (Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc.).

Some other public users of EDI are Cargill, Inc., Continental Grain, Inc., General Mills, Inc., Leshner and Associates, Sparks Commodities, Quaker Oats Company, and W.R. Grace & Company.

(more)



## USDA'S ELECTRONIC INFO SERVICES (continued)

Meanwhile, the number of users of USDA ONLINE service offered through Dialcom system also continues to grow--more than 300 regular users and many others who access only once a week or less often.

A number of the USDA ONLINE users also are news media or information disseminators. A more detailed report on USDA ONLINE users will be available from the Special Programs Division of the Office of Information after Jan. 1. (12/5)

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## ALTHOUGH COMPUTER AGE IS UPON US, PAPERLESS OFFICE APPEARS TO BE FURTHER OFF

Futurists and other acknowledged seers have been predicting "paperless offices" since the beginning of the new Information Age.

But it appears the opposite may be true.

A recent report from Frost and Sullivan, Inc., a New York, N.Y., firm, says the fastest growing category of computer-related supplies is not disks, printer ribbons or print wheels, but ordinary paper.

The report shows an additional 24 percent of paper will be consumed each year by the microcomputer world, which will total nearly 450 billion sheets each year by 1990.

The primary reason for the growth in paper demand is attributed by the firm's study to the ever-increasing popularity of laser and ink-jet printers with microcomputer users. (12/5)

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## FSIS SEEKS SUPERVISORY PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST FOR PRINTED MEDIA UNIT

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service is hiring a GS-13 Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist to head the Printed Media Unit of the Information Office.

The job oversees the planning and production of printed materials for the press as well as for the agency's extensive consumer education program, including FOOD NEWS FOR CONSUMERS, a quarterly magazine.

FSIS administers the federal meat and poultry inspection program, and the Information Office deals with issues ranging from technical aspects of the inspection program, regulatory actions against violators, and safe handling of meat and poultry. The Head of the Printed Media Unit supervises 8 employees.

The announcement (FSIS-8736) closes Dec. 29. For information on applying, contact: Della McCall at (202) 447-6617. (12/8)

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## NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TECHNOLOGY AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY SET FOR DEC. 11-13

A national "Conference on Technology and Agricultural Policy" was held on Dec. 11-13 in Washington, D.C.

Purpose of the conference was to discuss how new biological, genetic and chemical technologies can best be exploited by U.S. farmers and how different public policy programs affect agricultural innovation.

The meeting was sponsored by the National Research Council's Board on Agriculture, Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy of Resources for the Future.

(more)

## NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE (continued)

According to a press release issued by the National Research Council, American farmers and ranchers have exploited a continuous stream of new technologies over the last four decades--technologies that have resulted in higher crop yields, the capacity to meet growing foreign demand for agricultural commodities, and reduced food costs in the United States.

"But still unclear is how technology can contribute to agriculture in the future, and how those contributions will be influenced by research directions and economic and regulatory policies," the release said.

All sessions of the conference were to be held in the auditorium of the National Academy of Sciences building, 2100 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

For additional information contact Rick Borchelt, (202) 334-2138.

(12/8)

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## UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SEEKS JOURNALIST FOR EXTENSION EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The University of Missouri-Columbia, has an opening for Assistant/Associate Professor in the Department of Extension Education, Office of Agriculture.

They are looking for a journalist with across-the-board talent with special emphasis on broadcast training and experience in disseminating educational information for mass media.

The person selected will be expected to produce audio and video materials for use in commercial and educational broadcasting, to write narration and voice tapes, and to work with other members of the Agricultural Editor's Office faculty to support the College of Agriculture's information efforts.

A small portion of the effort will be devoted to classroom teaching and training of College faculty in working with mass media.

A doctorate degree is preferred and a masters is required. Also required is one degree in radio/television or broadcast journalism.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, but the selection process will begin Jan. 15.

Send resumes to Richard L. Lee, Chairman, Department of Extension Education and Agricultural Editor, 1-98 Agriculture Building, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO 65211, or phone (314) 882-2480. Dialcom mailbox is AGS1355.

(12/12)

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## USDA'S UPDATED ORGANIZATION CHART IS OFF PRESS AND NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE

Nearly 7,000 copies of the poster-size version of the latest USDA pictorial organization chart have been placed in USDA's Central Supply. The Office of Information's Special Programs Division received a small supply of copies for serving the Office of the Secretary.

A slightly smaller version of the chart will be printed in the December issue of "USDA NEWS" employee publication which is distributed to all employees.

The order number for the Central Supply stock is AD-448, and the cost is \$1.00 each, according to Milt Sloane, chart editor, Special Programs Division.

(12/12)

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## CURRENT RESEARCH INFORMATION SYSTEM (CRIS) HAS BROCHURE DESCRIBING SERVICES

The Current Research Information System (CRIS) is a ready source of information on agricultural and forestry research projects in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and at the nation's land grant institutions, state agricultural experiment stations, schools of forestry and cooperating schools of veterinary medicine, according to a brochure published by USDA's Cooperative State Research Service.

The USDA computer-based system contains nearly 30,000 descriptions of current publicly-supported agricultural and forestry research projects. Updates are monthly.

For further information on CRIS, or for a copy of the brochure, write or call: CRIS, National Agricultural Library, 5th Floor, Beltsville, MD 20705. Telephone (301) 344-3846 or 344-3850, or Dialcom mailbox AGS3014.

(12/12)

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## USDA WELL REPRESENTED AT NATIONAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS CONFERENCE

USDA, with 32 registrants, was well represented at the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) annual conference last month. USDA registrants were the highest number of any department or agency at the conference.

Brenda Curtis-Heiken of the Radio & Television Division of USDA's Office of Information, and past president of NAGC, had the responsibility of introducing dignitaries and presenting awards.

The "Communicator of the Year" award went to Bernard Kalb, who was selected some time before he resigned from the State Department because of his opposition to the "disinformation" flap. CNN and C-Span carried the awards ceremony live.

(12/12)

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## U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING OFFICE TO SURVEY FOR ACCESS INFORMATION NEEDS

By the end of December, the U.S. Government Accounting Office (GAO), the watchdog arm of the United States Congress, plans to distribute a 17-page survey about information dissemination.

Vince DeSanti, of GAO, said his agency wants to assess the information needs of federal agencies and the public users of that information.

DeSanti spoke at the December meeting of the Federal Publishing Committee presided over by Robin Atkiss, of the Department of Health & Human Services and the committee's chairman.

The GAO official's responses to questions from the committee members indicated the survey would take a lot of time and effort. Agencies probably will have until May 1 to respond, DeSanti said. Compiling the answers will be difficult and time consuming, he said, but GAO will accept agencies' best estimates where necessary and will accept "no" answers if no estimates are available.

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## GAO INFORMATION SURVEY (continued)

However, this GAO survey to assess federal activities and public information needs will not be sent to federal public affairs/information officers to handle. DeSanti said GAO will send it to the senior "information resources management" official in each department, who will be expected to assign parts of it to the public information people to complete. Responses will go back to GAO through the senior IRM official.

GAO will send a smaller, 6-page, survey to the "user" publics: Depository libraries, firms which charge fees to get information from the government for people, and to associations of librarians, said DeSanti.

GAO will not survey news media, a major user of federal information. DeSanti said he could not recall why not, but that the staff who developed the survey had discussed it and decided not to survey the press.

Nor, he said, will the survey assess the information activities of federal agency press service offices, whose missions are to release and print information to news media.

DeSanti said the survey will ask such things as costs involved, how agencies prefer to distribute information, how much they do by computer, where they go for support for these activities, current technologies being used, what constituencies are being served, whether any agencies' databases are kept from public access, and a lot more.

The survey is part of a U.S. Office of Technology Assessment study being done for the House of Representatives' Committee on Government Operations and by the House-Senate Joint Committee on Printing.

DeSanti promised about 500 copies of the survey will be delivered directly to members of the Federal Publishing Committee, who will in turn distribute to the various departments and independent agencies.

Russell Forte, Ed Poe and Stan Prochaska represented USDA's Office of Information at the last meeting. Some USDA agency public affairs specialists also attended the meeting.

Committee chairman Atkiss urges federal information people to attend the monthly committee meetings. There is no charge for joining or attending the committee's meetings.

The committee is currently forming an electronic publishing task force. Forte will be one of the USDA members. (12/18)

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## ASSESSMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND PUBLIC INFORMATION DISSEMINATION POLICY UNDERWAY

The U.S. Office of Technology Assessment has begun an extensive assessment of "Technology, Public Policy, and the Changing Nature of Federal Information Dissemination."

The study was requested by the House of Representatives Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on Government Information, Justice and Agriculture (chaired by Rep. Glenn English) and the Senate-House Joint Committee on Printing. It was approved by OTA's Technology Assessment Board in May 1986.

A project advisory panel for the study was selected and held its initial meeting in late July 1986. Fred Wood, OTA, is the project director.

(more)



## OTA INFORMATION DISSEMINATION ASSESSMENT (continued)

An all-day meeting on federal information dissemination was held Dec. 12. The representatives discussed identification and descriptions of key communications technologies, evaluation of these technologies, technological opportunities and problems for the federal government, and current institutional roles of line agencies, U.S. Government Printing Office, Commerce Department's National Technical Information Service, depository libraries, etc.

Stan Prochaska, chief of Special Programs Division in USDA's Office of Information, attended as USDA's representative, and Russell Forte, of Special Programs Division, attended as an observer. Project chairman Wood pointed out at the meeting that USDA was a leader in electronic information dissemination.

The central focus of the OTA study reflects the primary interests of the requesting congressional committees in the policy implications of advancing electronic technology for the printing and dissemination of federal information, including implications for the future role of GPO and other government agencies which have a major role in information dissemination.

The emphasis is primarily on information dissemination (defined to include printing of such information), although information collection, maintenance and processing will be considered where relevant to dissemination.

Focus is principally on federal information that is public, that is, not subject to Freedom of Information Act exemptions. However, privacy, confidentiality, national security and related issues will be considered where they significantly affect dissemination of public information.

In developing the assessment plan, OTA recognized the immense complexity of the federal information arena. In order to provide direction for subsequent research activity, the overall research objectives of the study are:

(1) To provide an understanding of the opportunities and problems presented by advancing electronic technology as applied to printing and dissemination of federal information by GPO and federal departments/agencies;

(2) To develop a picture of how the GPO, other federal agencies and the private sector are currently using or planning to use electronic technology and electronic formats as well as paper formats in information dissemination;

(3) To develop an understanding of the needs and problems of federal information users and their current, planned or desired use of electronic technology, and use of electronic formats compared to paper formats; and

(4) To identify and analyze a range of institutional and policy options for applying the technology and meeting user needs, including, for example, options for:

- alternative future roles for the GPO and other major federal information dissemination agencies,
- alternative mechanisms for government-wide management of federal information,
- pricing of federal information,
- role of the private sector in federal information dissemination,
- balancing agency mission, government efficiency and cost reduction considerations with respect to federal information dissemination,
- balancing public access, open government and national security considerations with respect to such information, and
- revisions to relevant public laws, e.g., Public Printing Act, Paperwork Reduction Act, Freedom of Information Act, etc.

Wood promised the assembled representatives that they would be consulted as the study project moves forward, including possibility of future meetings.

(12/18)

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## USDA VIDEO EEO/CIVIL RIGHTS TRAINING CONFERENCE SETS NEW RECORDS

More than 5,000 USDA managers and supervisors from across the country recently took part in a historical video training conference via satellite on equal employment opportunity and civil rights.

The training session used the latest techniques and technology for training, and reached the greatest number of USDA people of any teleconference to date, according to USDA officials.

The 3-hour event was engineered by the Video and Film Division of USDA's Office of Information, in cooperation with USDA's Office of Personnel. It began at 11 a.m., Eastern time, stopped for a one-hour break at noon, and then resumed at 1 p.m.

OI Video and Film Division chief Larry Quinn acknowledged that four contract employees were hired temporarily to supplement the division staff, but the regular staff shouldered the major load for the planning and execution of the event.

Betty Fleming, head of the teleconference center, spent several days arranging the 77 official downlink sites for the conference, a record number for any USDA video conference. Many of the sites were located at land grant universities, but included hotels, television stations and hospitals. The largest site was the Jefferson Auditorium at USDA in Washington, D.C.

In addition to the official sites, at least another dozen informal sites picked up the signal. An audio conferencing bridge was used to gather feedback from the "ad hoc" and the official sites during and after the conference.

Several people reported to Quinn, and to USDA's director of information, John McClung, how impressed they were with USDA's ability to handle such a nationwide event with apparent ease and professionalism.

Aside from a minor technical problem with one prerecorded segment, the conference went smoothly. Staff reacted quickly to the tape problem by using a backup tape and playback machine. For the short period it took to make the correction, conference host, Felix Villa Lobos, ad libbed questions with a studio guest. Villa Lobos is a public affairs specialist with OI News Division.

Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng opened the conference through a taped appearance, because he was attending an international trade meeting in Europe. Deputy Secretary Peter Myers closed the conference, also via tape since he was scheduled for a out-of-town speaking engagement. Only the studio participants could tell that the two top USDA officials' statements had been prerecorded.

The next USDA video conference event will be Feb. 12. It will be a satellite TV news conference with key USDA officials. (12/19)

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## USDA'S OFFICE OF INFORMATION HAS OPENING FOR VISUAL INFORMATION SPECIALIST

The Photography Division of USDA's Office of Information has an opening for a Visual Information Specialist, GS-1084-9/11 (Announcement # OGPA-86-27), to plan, develop, and produce a wide range of photojournalism products aimed at media disseminations.

Send resumes to Pamela Keene, USDA, OP, Personnel Operations, Rm. 25-W, Washington, DC 20250. Closing date is Jan. 7. (12/30)

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